

REMARKS

Claims 1-16 remain pending in this application. Claims 1, 2, 4, 8, 9, 11, 12 and 14 have been amended hereby. Support for the amendments to the claims can be found in, e.g., paragraphs [0019]-[0022] of the specification. No new matter has been entered. For the reasons stated below, Applicants respectfully submit that all claims pending in this application are in condition for allowance.

In the final rejection set forth in the Office Action, claims 1-4, 6-14 and 16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Allison et al. (WO 200271234 A) (“Allison”) and claims 5 and 15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Allison in view of Garcia (US 6,633,764) (“Garcia”). These grounds of rejection are respectfully traversed.

The present invention, as recited in the claims, is directed to methods for detecting undesirable events that may occur in a network. More specifically, the claimed embodiments of the present invention are configured to detect unwanted “spam” messages or undesirable routing loop conditions. This is accomplished by keeping track of not only the number of times that a message is received from a given source (and perhaps destined for a given destination) using a counter, but also of what time a given message is received, by using timestamps.

In accordance with the amended claims, an array of timestamps is provided for each source (and/or destination) address, and this array is processed to remove entries that fall outside of a sliding timing window. The counter is decremented for each timestamp array entry that is removed. In this way, it is possible to better determine whether a threshold number of messages from the given source (or destination) has been received over a predetermined period of time.

As explained in, e.g., paragraph [0019] of the specification, “[w]ith the counter and timestamp information, it is possible in accordance with the present invention to implement an efficient “jumping window” of fixed size by using a garbage collection method that removes all entries older than a fixed window size in regular intervals.” (Emphasis added.) Without the expressly claimed “timestamp array” aspect of the invention (along with the counter aspect), any such “garbage collection method” cannot be efficiently performed.

Allison discloses a method for preventing short message service (SMS) message flooding. As explained at Page 13 of the reference, a flood control module 340 employs a table similar to that shown by Table 1 on that same page that keeps track of calling and called parties, point codes, and carrier identifications. The table also includes a field for the number of SMS messages and a threshold value. This table and the corresponding discussion thereof, however, does not disclose, teach or suggest the use of a timestamp, let alone a timestamp array, as now expressly claimed, in connection with identifying spam or routing loop events.

Since Allison fails to disclose a feature of the claimed invention, Allison cannot anticipate the claims. Furthermore, Garcia fails to cure the deficiencies of Allison regarding, at least, the claimed timestamp array feature. As such, all of the claims in this case are believed to be in condition for allowance. Should the Examiner have any questions or determine that any further action is desirable to place this application in even better condition for issue, the Examiner is encouraged to telephone applicants' undersigned representative at the number listed below.

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